

103
**GEORGE ARCENEUX, JR., UNITED
STATES COURTHOUSE, HOUMA, LA**

(103-37)

Y 4. P 96/11:103-37

RING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON

PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON

PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

H.R. 3186

TO DESIGNATE THE UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE LOCATED IN
HOUMA, LA, AS THE "GEORGE ARCENEUX, JR., UNITED STATES
COURTHOUSE"

OCTOBER 19, 1993

Printed for the use of the
Committee on Public Works and Transportation



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103D CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3186

To designate the United States courthouse located in Houma, Louisiana, as the "George Arceneaux, Jr., United States Courthouse".

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 29, 1993

Mr. TAUZIN (for himself, Mr. HAYES, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana, Mr. LIVINGSTON, Mr. MCCRERY, and Mr. BAKER of Louisiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Public Works and Transportation

A BILL

To designate the United States courthouse located in Houma, Louisiana, as the "George Arceneaux, Jr., United States Courthouse".

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.**

4 The United States courthouse located at 800 East
5 Main Street in Houma, Louisiana, is designated as the
6 "George Arceneaux, Jr., United States Courthouse".

7 **SEC. 2. LEGAL REFERENCES.**

8 Any reference in a law, regulation, document, record,
9 map, or other paper of the United States to the courthouse

1 referred to in section 1 is deemed to be a reference to
2 the "George Arceneaux, Jr., United States Courthouse".

GEORGE ARCENEUX, JR., UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE, HOUMA, LA

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1993

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS,
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 8:33 a.m., in room 2253, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. James A. Traficant, Jr. (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. TRAFICANT. The subcommittee will come to order.

I would like to recognize the distinguished Representative from Louisiana, Congressman Billy Tauzin, who will testify on behalf of H.R. 3186, a bill to designate the United States Courthouse located in Houma, Louisiana, as the "George Arceneaux, Jr., United States Courthouse."

I would like to enter into the record two documents that clarify that although the courthouse will be designated by H.R. 3186 as a GSA-leased rather than -owned building, GSA has an express understanding with the lessor that the designation is acceptable and that, furthermore, this understanding will be reduced to a supplemental agreement between GSA and the lessor and made part of their lease agreement prior to the enactment of this bill.

[The referenced documents follow:]



General Services Administration, Region 7
819 Taylor Street
Fort Worth, TX 76102

October 15, 1993

The Honorable James A. Traficant
House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Public Buildings
and Grounds
RHOB Room B-376
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Traficant:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information regarding the new leased GSA Courthouse building in Houma, LA. HR 3186 will designate this building as the George Arceneaux, Jr., U.S. Courthouse. We have contacted the lessor, and he has no objection to having the building designated as the George Arceneaux, Jr., United States Courthouse, 800 East Main Street, Houma, LA 70360. A letter to this effect is enclosed.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to call me or Mr. Douglas Hamilton, District Manager, Real Property Management and Safety Division, at 817-334-2541.

Sincerely,

Arlene D. Schley
Arlene D. Schley
Acting Regional Administrator (7A)

Enclosure

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10-80		# of pages 2	
FAX TRANSMITTAL			
To	Susan Bitts	From	Arlene Schley
Dept. Agency		Phone #	817-334-2321
Fax #	202-225-4627	Fax #	
NBN 7540-01-317-7368		5088-101	
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION			

PLEASE DELIVER FAX TO:

Ms. JULIAN MILLS
 WITH GSA
 FAX NO. 584-6678
 DATE 10/14/93
 TOTAL PAGES, INCLUDING THIS COVER 1

FROM:
 R.J. SHAW CONSTRUCTION CO., INC.
 P.O. BOX 9044 HOUMA, LA 70361
 PHONE (304) 851-5671
 FAX (504) 851-5729
 SENT BY: Ronald J. Shaw

Re: Houma Courthouse

THIS IS TO CONFIRM OUR TELECON TODAY —

HOUMA COURTHOUSE LIMITED PARTNERSHIP APPROVES &
 WELCOMES THE NAMING OF THE BUILDING AS THE
 GEORGE ARCEVENY, JR. UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURTHOUSE
 FOR THE DURATION OF THE LEASE. THIS AGREEMENT WILL SURVIVE
 ANY CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP.

Ronald J. Shaw

RONALD J. SHAW, GENERAL PARTNER

FAX CC: MR. RAMIRO MORA (FAX NO 817-885-7194)

Mr. TRAFICANT. At this time I would like to welcome the distinguished chairman and leader in the Congress for his statement on behalf of H.R. 3186.

**TESTIMONY OF HON. WILLIAM J. (BILLY) TAUZIN, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM LOUISIANA**

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Chairman, thank you. My apologies for my late arrival. Sometimes the traffic can move and sometimes the Trafficant. [Laughter.]

Mr. TAUZIN. I was caught in it this morning.

Mr. TRAFICANT. Don't start. [Laughter.]

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Chairman, I come today to tell you a story about a remarkable man from my home community in south Louisiana, Judge George Arceneaux, and about why I have introduced a bill to name the new Federal courthouse building in Houma, Louisiana after this man. I am joined by the entire Louisiana delegation in this request.

He was born in Houma to a family that traces its roots back, like so many of us do, to the Acadians in Nova Scotia, a 400-year experience on this continent; 200 years in the French-speaking provinces of what is now Nova Scotia and was then Acadia, and 200 years in Louisiana.

He was appointed to the Federal bench in 1979 and was the first Acadian judge named to the Federal court since the 1920s. We're quite proud of that.

He graduated valedictorian of his class in 1945, went to LSU where he was, or as Justin Wilson would say, "LUS, our university." He was a journalist for a local newspaper. His career was interrupted by Korean War service, where he was an intelligence analyst for the 38th Military Intelligence Service at Fort Meade, Maryland.

After his discharge he went to work as a legislative assistant here in Washington for then-Senator Allen J. Ellender, an incredible man in his own right who, by the way, was responsible for the Federal Food Stamp Program. He brought the experience of an impoverished State like Louisiana to the national level and made sure that children weren't going hungry across the country.

In 1972, Senator Ellender died at the height of his career while he was President Pro Tempore of the Senate. While in Washington, Judge Arceneaux married and earned his law degree from American University in 1957.

He returned to Houma to practice law, and later was appointed judge by President Jimmy Carter in 1979. We lost his services in April of 1993 following unsuccessful surgery for lung disease.

The thing that I think filled Judge Arceneaux' life and his career and the reason why so many folks back home are excited about having an edifice named for him was his humanity. Like so many Cajuns, he was close to family and community and to roots. He showed it in his temper and his temperament and in the way he treated people from the Federal bench. So often the Federal judiciary is accused of arrogance and, with lifetime appointments, a lack of feeling and touch with people. Judge Arceneaux was the exact epitome of a judge who met all the criteria of the kind of Federal

judges I think all of us would want across America, who remembered where they came from and who they served.

He was the author of the concept of a Federal courthouse in Houma. He fought the New Orleans judiciary to make it happen. New Orleans judges don't want to travel out into the country, into the bayous, to serve people. They want everybody to drag their luggage and their families up to New Orleans to seek justice in the big city.

Houma—Thibodaux now, it's all incorporated into one community of Terrebonne—is the fourth largest community in our State. It doesn't have a media center, but it will now have a Federal courthouse because of Judge Arceneaux. It is under construction, just about to be built. The New Orleans judiciary tried to kill it three, four, five times. When Judge Arceneaux died they thought they had another shot at it, and Senator Breaux and I particularly had to go to work to save it, not only for his memory but for the people that he served.

So as it is about to take place, we ask you and Members of Congress to dedicate it in his memory.

The Houma Courier noted in an editorial following his death that "It took nearly a lifetime, but U.S. District Judge George Arceneaux, Jr., who died in April, saw his dream become a reality. Well, almost. Just before his death, construction began."

We're going to finish this courthouse real soon, and I think this Congress could do a great service to the memory and to the family of Judge Arceneaux and to the community he served by putting his name up on it. It's a leased facility, one of those GSA lease arrangements that is probably going to save us money in the long run, the way it's being done. It's a good project. But the owner of the building is excited and, as you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, anxious to sign a sidebar agreement consenting and agreeing to the naming of the building in honor of the judge.

Mr. Chairman and Members who serve on one of the committees of our Congress that I know doesn't get a lot of attention all the time like the big Energy and Commerce Committee, let me thank you for the work you do in these so important things in the career of our Nation, when we take time out to say thank you and to remember judges like Judge Arceneaux. This is a big thing for a lot of people back home. It is a big thing that you do when you approve this bill for us, and I thank you for giving me the time to talk about it.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Tauzin follows:]

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN BILLY TAUZIN
OCTOBER 19, 1993
HEARING BEFORE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND
TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I come before you today to tell you about a remarkable man from South Louisiana, Judge George Arceneaux - and about why I have introduced a bill, cosponsored by the entire Louisiana delegation, to name a new federal courthouse in Houma, Louisiana after Judge Arceneaux.

George Arceneaux, Jr. was born in Houma, Louisiana to a family that traces its roots back to the exile of the Acadians from Nova Scotia. When appointed to the federal bench in 1979, Judge Arceneaux was the first Acadian judge named to the federal court since the 1920s.

After graduating valedictorian of his 1945 class at Terrebonne High School, he went on to Louisiana State University, graduating in 1949 and becoming a print journalist for a local newspaper. This career was interrupted by the Korean War, when he served as an intelligence analyst with the 38th Military Intelligence Service Company at Fort Meade, Maryland.

After an honorable discharge, Arceneaux went to work as a legislative assistant, then administrative assistant to Senator Allen J. Ellender of Houma, who died in 1972 at the height of his career in public service as President Pro Tempore of the U.S. Senate. While in Washington, Arceneaux married and earned his J.D. degree from American University in 1957.

In 1960, Arceneaux returned to Houma to practice law until his appointment by President Jimmy Carter to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana (in New Orleans) on September 26, 1979. After a distinguished career on the bench, Judge Arceneaux died in April, 1993, following unsuccessful surgery for lung disease.

During his years in private practice and on the bench, Judge Arceneaux devoted significant time and energy to improving both the judiciary and the community - through service on Judicial Conference and on numerous community boards and charities. But perhaps he is best remembered for his lifelong efforts to bring the federal court to Houma.

It was while working in Washington that Judge Arceneaux took note of the hardship that traveling to New Orleans to conduct any business with the federal court caused the people in rural south Louisiana. After returning to Houma to practice law, Judge Arceneaux saw first hand the difficulty and inconvenience the distant location of the federal court caused the people of the Houma area - whether filing papers or being called as witnesses or for jury duty.

Through the years, Judge Arceneaux continued to push the idea of this satellite courthouse. He remained steadfast in his devotion through the long and complicated process, overcoming countless obstacles within the federal court system and finally through Congress.

As the Houma Courier noted in an editorial following his death:

It took nearly a lifetime, but U.S. District Judge George

Aroeneaux, Jr., who died in April, saw his dream become a reality. Well almost. Just before his death, construction began on a federal courthouse here in Houma.

Though his dream of presiding over federal court here will not be realized, his plan to make the court accessible to the people of Terrebonne, Lafourche, Assumption, St. James and St. John parishes must be...Aroeneaux spent his life serving others, working in Washington, assisting clients in Houma, sitting on the federal bench, and as vice president of Rotary International...But he should be remembered by the people of this area for bringing the federal court to them. Those whose lives he touched - and there are literally thousands - are now responsible for seeing the project through to its conclusion. This must be his legacy.

Mr. Chairman, I am proud to have known Judge Aroeneaux and can think of no greater and more fitting tribute than naming this new federal courthouse after him.

As the courthouse is scheduled to be completed around the first week of December, I would appreciate your assistance in getting this bill through the Congress as soon as possible. Senator Johnston has introduced a companion bill on the Senate side and will be moving it quickly. Thank you for your consideration.

Mr. TRAFICANT. Thank you.

Mr. DUNCAN?

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Chairman, I will just say that based on the testimony of our friend, Congressman Tauzin, Judge Arceneaux was a wonderful man and he was the kind of judge that we need more of. So I am pleased to support this legislation.

Mr. TAUZIN. Thank you, Mr. Duncan.

Mr. TRAFICANT. What I would just like to say is that, never having met Judge Arceneaux, it seems that he's the kind of Federal judge that every district would like to have, number one.

Number two, I don't know what would be the status of the GSA lease apparatus, but in the future, I can say this to you, that we're not only supporting putting Judge Arceneaux's name on that building; we're supporting the people so that that courthouse can remain there and they don't have to pack their bags, stay overnight, spend that big city ticket to go get that justice with a lot of duress and a lot of pressure.

You have our support. We are very, very proud of you and your efforts as the leader around here. It's a little higher profile than what we do. We are glad to have you with us here today, I want you to know that. We have no problem with this; we are glad to support it; we are glad to see that you and Senator Breaux have taken a stand to make sure that people have justice. While we are here, both Mr. Duncan and myself, and the rest of the committee is not here, we will support you in any efforts you have to tailor that lease or to change it as needed to provide justice in that district.

With that, I strongly support approval of H.R. 3186. I thank this excellent Congressman for his testimony. That concludes our hearing.

Mr. TAUZIN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[Whereupon, at 9:05 a.m., the subcommittee proceeded to further business.]

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